

Year of Clean Water Updates—National Water Quality Monitoring Day Events

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Presidential Proclamation: The [Proclamation](#) by the President of the United States of America, marking the 30th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act, declares the year beginning 18 October 2002 as the Year of Clean Water, 2002-2003.

Maj. Gen. Hans Van Winkle, USACE Deputy Commanding General, got into the spirit of the Year of Clean Water when he spoke to more than 300 students at the National Youth Watershed Summit in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 9. He discussed the importance of finding solutions that will keep the nation's water resources safe from contamination and misuse, and the need to make a commitment to clean water and environmental protection.

National Water Quality Monitoring Day: Dozens of activities sponsored by Corps of Engineers Districts and labs took place around the United States to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, including the inauguration of National Water Monitoring Day. The main purpose of this celebration is to take a snapshot view of streams, lakes, and coastal waters throughout the United States by inviting citizen monitors, established volunteer monitoring organizations, and representatives from federal, tribal, state and local agencies to evaluate water quality conditions within their local watersheds. Data collected by all participating monitors can be viewed at The Year of Clean Water [website](#). While the data collected probably will not undergo quality assurance and quality control procedures, they could be used to identify potential problem areas where states may need to do more monitoring. More importantly, these events, many of which will be repeated throughout the coming year, help to connect people to their watersheds.

A few of those events are summarized below:

Huntington District: Thirty 8th grade students from Our Lady of Fatima School helped the district to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the National Clean Water Act by testing the water quality of the Ohio River at Harris Riverfront Park in Huntington (and at 50 other Corps sites in the District). Students took samples, tested them, and learned that the actions of individuals on a daily basis not only affects water quality locally, but can have impacts downstream.

Mobile District: This day provided a great venue for the Corps and the University of South Alabama to strengthen their partnership. The Mobile District staff conducted two workshops at the Oct. 19 "Expanding Your Horizons" conference sponsored by the USA Women in Science. Over 200 students from local middle schools took part in the seminar designed to encourage young women to pursue math and science-related careers. The district's volunteers guided 18 participants through collecting and testing water samples from the university's wetlands; their individual water sample test results contributed to a national database to be posted to the National Water Sampling Day website.

Little Rock District: The project offices at Lake Dardanelle and Mt. Home both participated in National Water Monitoring Day activities. Twenty members of a local scout troop, working with the Arkansas State Stream Team, conducted tests at the Bona Dea site at Lake Dardanelle, and a group of school children in the 6th & 7th grades at the Pinkston Middle School in Mt. Home, AR, conducted tests at three different sites at the Mt. Home reservoir.

ERDC, Vicksburg: In Vicksburg, Miss., students from four local high schools joined the U.S. Army Research and Development Center (ERDC) in a hands-on sampling exercise, testing water from various creeks, streams and lakes as well as the Yazoo River at the Vicksburg waterfront. The students saw firsthand that what they learn in the classrooms has real-life applications.

San Francisco District: The San Francisco District sponsored events for both young and old in two events at Lake Sonoma. School children learned about clean water as part of the school district's Health, Safety & Nutrition Fair while the adults actually tested the pond water at Lake Sonoma. On Oct. 19, at San Pedro Creek in Pacifica, Calif., members of the Explorer Post 333 collected data from four different monitoring points. The Explorer Scouts are co-sponsored by the district and Bechtel Corporation as part of the "Learning for Life" career education program.

Buffalo District: Juniors and seniors from a Buffalo area high school headed out to Onondaga Creek, a major tributary of Onondaga Lake in central New York, to learn how the quality of water in the tributary affects the quality of water in the lake and the entire watershed. Working with Buffalo District employees, the students learned how to take and read water samples. Several of the students then attended the Onondaga Lake Partnership Annual Progress Meeting on Nov. 13 to give a brief report on what they learned, saying also that they desired other similar hands-on learning opportunities. As a result, the Partnership, which includes the Buffalo District, is pursuing a continuing relationship with the school group.

Walla Walla District: More than 50 people participated in "Eyes on Indian Creek" activities sponsored by Albertson College of Idaho, the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, the National Park Service Rivers and Trails program, the City of Caldwell and the Corps' Walla Walla District. District staff on the Indian Creek Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility team was the hosts. Participants looked at fish and bugs found in the creek and learned about water sampling techniques.

Ft. Worth District: The Fort Worth District sponsored water-sampling activities at Benbrook and Waco Lakes and Sam Rayburn Reservoir. In all three cases, students learned from their testing that the overall water quality was "generally good." The District plans for water quality monitoring to be an ongoing activity, with intensive water quality sampling programs at nine of its Texas lakes.

St. Louis District: Illinois and Missouri elementary, jr. high, and high school students participated in several days of activities, and were then awarded a St. Louis District Corps badge, "Junior Water Experts." Students learned how to sample water, were introduced to the Corps' Environmental Operating Principles, and participated in a "Drink at your own risk" demonstration that discussed and displayed different water pollutants. They even had an opportunity to drink "stuff" with bugs, snakes, trash and foam (which in reality were Kool-aid, lemonade and frappe).

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